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STATE FOR EAP/MLS/ACOPE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/03/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EAID](#) [BM](#) [EUN](#) [FI](#)  
SUBJECT: FINLAND: BURMA POST-CYCLONE ASSISTANCE RESPONSE

REF: A. STATE 68527  
[1](#)B. STATE 59122

Classified By: DCM Michael A. Butler for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) PolOff delivered demarche Shaping Post-Cyclone Assistance in Burma to Theresa Zitting, First Secretary, Asia and Oceania on July 2 who stated that Finland agrees with USG points on Burma: GoF condemns political prisoners, condemns that they are still under house arrest, is concerned with Burma's attitude toward humanitarian assistance, is and is concerned with Burma's roadmap and next steps because they don't take minorities and opposition into consideration.

[1](#)2. (C) During the demarche, Zitting shared her impressions of a seminar held in Helsinki for Burmese opposition in exile, which she attended on June 9 and 10. About 50 people, mostly from European countries, attended the seminar, though two people from Burma's opposition traveled to Helsinki under false names in order to participate. She mentioned that Madame Nyny, (protect name) a representative from the Asian Institute of Technology, is allowed to travel, attended and put forth an idea for courses on strengthening NGOs and civil society. Preceding the Helsinki seminar, only the Burmese opposition attendees met June 7 and 8. They are hoping to find a common vision on how to go forward through a series of forums and meetings. Zitting observed that most of the opposition would take a more pragmatic approach to dealing with the junta than is currently favored by Aung San Suu Kyi, but they are currently not in full agreement as a group. Independent Diplomat is working on a future meeting and the Finnish MFA is looking for financing opportunities to empower and coordinate. Zitting expects a complete report on the Burmese seminar by the end of this month and will brief PolOff further.  
BARRETT